

MITROVIC -- 10/807,439
Client/Matter: 071469-0307905

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REMARKS

Claims 15, 16, and 21 have been amended. Claims 1-13, 19, and 24-32 have been canceled. Accordingly, after entry of this Amendment, claims 15-18 and 20-23 will remain pending.

In the Office Action dated July 24, 2006, the Examiner rejected claim 14 and 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ishikawa (Japanese Patent Publication No. JP 02-228546). Claim 31 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Mountsier et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,810,933). In addition, claim 31 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Tamura et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,556,204). Next, the Examiner rejected claims 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Howald (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0038114). Finally, claims 14, 16-18, and 21-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamashita et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0086546) in view of Mountsier et al. The Applicant respectfully disagrees with these rejections and, therefore, respectfully traverses the same.

In the Office Action, the Examiner also indicated that claims 19 and 20 were objected to but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter.

Given that claim 19 was indicated as containing allowable subject matter, and without conceding that the Applicant agrees with the rejections asserted by the Examiner, the Applicant has elected to seek the allowance of the claims based upon the indication of allowable subject matter in claim 19. Accordingly, the Applicant has amended claim 16 to incorporate the limitations of both claim 14 and claim 19. Claim 16 formerly depended on claim 14, and claim 19 formerly depended on claim 16. With these changes, the Applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 16 now presents all of the limitations formerly recited by dependent claim 19. So that the claims are properly dependent upon one another, claims 15 and 21 have been amended to depend from amended claim 16.

In view of the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully submits that claims 15-18 and 20-23 are now in condition for allowance and such is earnestly solicited.

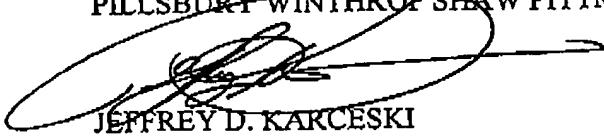
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Each of the Examiner's rejections having been addressed, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of the claims and pass the pending claims to issue.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 033975. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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